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Comprehensive Report on a Few Important Points Governing Land Reform During  
The Experimental Period for the Provincial Chinese Communist Party Committee  
Members by Minister SHAO (SP)

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Steps of Land Reform

In general, land reform should be divided into five phases: (1) propaganda and education, coordinated with reorganization, investigation, and research; (2) differentiation of classes; (3) confiscation and requisition; (4) distribution; (5) conclusion of reform and transformation of land reform into production.

The following is an explanation of the requirements and concrete items of each phase:

1. Propaganda and education coordinated with reorganization, investigation, and research.
  - a. The basic requirements: to establish a basis, following political enlightenment and political measures, to reorganize peasant units; to find and train executors for land reform; to impress members of various circles with the need for land reform and to prepare foundations for following political and organizational phases.
  - b. Concrete work:
    - 1) To mobilize the masses by propaganda and then educate them. First of all, education in land reform should be intensified by explaining the reasons for the poverty of the peasants, how the landlords live without working by exploiting the farmers, and the crimes of the landlord class in the old society, so as to elevate the class consciousness of the peasants by

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showing who supports whom. When the working corps go to the villages, they must be in earnest sympathy with the peasants, express their willingness to support the peasants and give them the courage to ask for land. Extreme hatred of the feudalistic and exploitive land-ownership system should be aroused among the peasants to make them determine firmly to eliminate the feudalistic system.

In some regions our general program of land reform was given to the peasants at the very outset. This is not the proper way to start land reform. We should start our education on the general program and policy of land reform after hatred of the landlords has been initiated, the peasants' class consciousness has been raised, and the peasants' determination to demand land has been ascertained. Then we further the peasants' consciousness by telling them that the basic aim of land reform is to abolish the feudalistic and exploitive land ownership system and replace it with a system of ownership of land by farmers and that the land reform is the first step in solving the farmers' poverty.

On the other hand, we should let the farmers know that they should depend on the poor and tenant farmers, unite with the middle-level farmers, and neutralize the rich farmers in order to eliminate the landlord class systematically. The farmers should also be told that land reform can progress smoothly only with a united majority, leniency with the landlords, and no molestation of the lands of rich farmers. These will lessen obstructions and centralize all strength to annihilate the landlord class. Leniency with the landlords with regard to their movable assets is one method of influencing them to surrender their land, which is the farmers' basic demand.

In teaching and explaining our principles to the farmers, we must always place their immediate benefits before anything else and then help them understand their future well-being through cooperation with our program and policy. In the past, there were two extreme tendencies concerning land reform in the old liberated areas. One was to emphasize only the benefits to the farmer without stressing policy, while the other was to stress policy without emphasizing immediate benefits. We should neglect neither of these two points, and equal attention should be given to the two factors so as to increase the farmers' consciousness and make them realize that they are the masters of the country.

- 2) We should unify the poor, tenant, and middle-level farmers so as to mobilize the laboring mass. In Kao Chao (高潮) village, a good foundation for land reform has been laid because the poor and tenant farmers are united with the middle farmers. Yi Ch'iao (义桥) village has concentrated on the middle farmers without depending on poor and tenant farmers so there is no distinction between landlords and farmers. When we mobilize the poor and tenant farmers, we should first of all implant in them the idea that they are the masters of the country. This will increase their consciousness and enable them to assume leadership by promoting their revolutionary determination and enthusiasm and eliminating their misconceptions about the principle of averages, simple economic laws and narrow-minded revenge.

When we say we must depend on the poor and tenant farmers, we mean that we should depend upon their deep consciousness and strength of organization. When we mobilize the middle farmers, we must hold special conferences to tell them that they are also part of the laboring mass and are oppressed by the landlords, as well as asking them to depend on the poor and tenant farmers for rejuvenation. This will enlighten them politically. Only by elevating the consciousness of the middle farmers will they be satisfied with the policy of land reform.

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c. Forms of propaganda: First we should educate the farmers through their actual experience in the past, with the accompaniment of recital of grievances. Before, we could use grievance-telling meetings as a means of arousing the farmers' consciousness, but now that their consciousness has been increased and landlords are giving concessions, we can only increase their education. Second, we should educate especially the backbone elements, the progressive and peasant representatives, and let them in turn educate the masses. Third, we should educate various circles, particularly the women, and enlighten them. When tracts of land from the middle farmers were distributed, many women in Kao Chao village cried. In other villages, however, where women have been educated, their zeal was high.

- 1) Propaganda for the landlords: There are two forms. Landlord conversions should be used in regions where some democratic gentry exist and where encouragement and education will dismember the landlord class. Landlord disciplinary meetings should be called in regions where no democratic gentry exist. Let the landlords understand the righteousness of land reform and the mistakes of the feudalistic land ownership system. If they attempt to sabotage the land reform, they will be brought to justice; if they abide by the decrees of the government, they will be shown leniency. Tell the landlords that the government of the Communist Party of China is a liberal government. It is quite different from that of the historical rulers who were rigorous and cruel with their subjects. Tell them too that in the old-liberated areas, the peasants have risen up against landlords who opposed land reform. The landlords will suffer for a period of time because of the confiscation of their land, but they must go through this to achieve new lives as citizens of the country. Dismemberment of the landlord class through education is a new weapon of struggle. Even to the enlightened landlords we should explain that land reform is a test for them. If they are completely enlightened, they will not dare oppose or sabotage land reform.

As to the rich farmers, we should let them choose one of the following: the way of the farmers or the way of the landlords. If they are willing to take the way of the farmers, it is good, but if they prefer the way of the landlords, then we must be critical. To win over the rich farmers we should explain to them that they will not be stripped of their movable property because of their participation in labor. They should also be told that for the time being our liberal policy allows hiring and exploiting of farm laborers. At present it is not necessary to reason with the rich farmers about land reform as was done in Chia Hsing ( ). As long as we do not touch their movable property, we don't have to reason with them about land reform.

In a word, in the propaganda and education phase, the most important thing for us to do is to mobilize the poor and tenant farmers. If we don't have their support, then we cannot solve any of our problems in connection with land reform. Meanwhile, the propaganda and education of the farmers should not be limited to this phase but should cover all other phases.

- 2) To reorganize the masses. Our program for land reform can be fulfilled only by reorganizing the masses. In the case of innocent elements who have wrong attitudes toward land reform, we should unite with them and draw them to participate in land reform by enlightening them. In the case of impure elements or those who are bribed by the landlords, we should reorganize them to undertake land reform propaganda so as to ascertain their real intentions in the work. Political commissar MO said: "Don't call the farmers who are bribed by the landlords running dogs; call them the unconscious farmers."

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We should remold those impure elements and separate them from the bad influence of the landlords and lead them to awareness. Make them divulge the plots of the landlords and put the main responsibility on the landlords' shoulders and center the blame on them alone. During their education, the progressive elements should be discovered, trained, and absorbed into the peasants associations, in order to insure a composition there of two thirds poor and tenant farmers and one third middle farmers. To reorganize the farming masses means to re-group, expand, or strengthen the original masses in a united front composed of old and new politically-conscious elements to carry out land reform.

Apart from the reorganization, we should make good use of the peasant representatives' conferences in coordination with village representatives' conferences for enlightening and uniting both groups. The village representatives' conferences can attract more progressive farmers, promote democracy, and popularize the party policy. When village representative conferences are held, the land reform plan should be passed and the creation of village peasant committees completed. A village peasant committee is made up of elements from the working corps, the old conscious farmers, and the new progressive farmers, with the leader of the working corps as chief. The village peasant committee will become the command post of land reform after its establishment.

- 3) Investigation and research: We should investigate and study the subject matter for propaganda to determine whether it is adequate. It should be applied to land reform according to the population and circumstances of each village.

## 2. Differentiation of classes.

- a. Requirement: Differentiation of classes is principally to distinguish between the enemy and us. Confiscation and requisition are for realization of "depending on the poor and tenant farmers, uniting the middle farmers and laborers, neutralizing the rich farmers, and dismembering and isolating the landlord class." Special attention should be paid to distinguishing between landlords, rich farmers, and landowners who have a small amount of land to rent. If the composition of the landlord class is made clear, the farmers will be able to struggle against it. Once the landlords recognize themselves as landlords, it means they will put down their political weapons and surrender to the farmers. In other words, the farmers will be successful in their struggle against the landlords.
- b. Steps: We should classify the landlords first, then the masses. To classify the landlords first is to isolate them from various circles, to eliminate the apprehension of various circles, and to lessen disputes among farmers.
  - 1) How to classify the landlords: In a sense to classify the landlords is to struggle against them. Under present circumstances where the masses have been mobilized to oppose the landlord's, they can hardly dare offer resistance. Besides, we can use state power to start a "reasoning struggle" or arrest the rascals and landlords who sabotage the land reform and bring them to justice before the People's Court. This year we have adopted a "lenient policy" toward the landlords and have not used

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"accusation meetings", which are employed only when reactionary power is strong.

- 2) How to classify the farming masses: First, we must strengthen the unity of the farming masses and tell the farmers that the poor, the tenant, and the middle peasants belong to one family. They are glorious because they are the laboring populace. Educate the poor and tenant farmers and ask them to take the lead in uniting with the middle farmers. Second, implant in the farmers right thoughts about economics. Correct their "principle of averages" and tell them that distribution of land is for the land-poor and landless farmers. To lessen the worries of the middle farmers, tell them that future loans will not be compulsory but will be in accord with their production and prevailing circumstances. Third, recruit the repentant middle farmers and ask them to recognize, in front of the farmer masses, that they are the middle farmers.
- 3) How to classify the rich farmers: In classifying the rich farmers, we should adopt some simple method instead of assuming 25 percent of the farming masses are rich.
- 4) How to classify landowners who have some land to rent: In some places, there are many landowners who have small amounts of land to rent. Ask them to elect their own representatives and make their own classification.

c. Methods of classifying farmers:

- 1) Determine clear standards of classification. First, distinguish between the landlords and the rich farmers, then between the landlords and the landowners who have small amounts of land to rent.
- 2) Criticize the classification: People's teams and peasant teams must conduct criticisms of landlords and farmers in the form of discussion and confession meetings.
- 3) How to pass the classification: The classification of landlords and rich farmers should be passed at the village people's conference, the classification of the farming masses by the peasants' committee. If the landlords are not satisfied with the classification, they can request a re-classification pending approval by the hsien committee.
- 4) To approve the classification: Generally approval of classification is in the hands of the Peasants' Association. In some cases, the chi committee should make examinations.

3. Confiscation and requisition:

- a. Requirement: We should make the landlords hand over their land and property which should be confiscated.
- b. Steps: Again the farming masses should be educated, with emphasis on the following points: (1) the difference between confiscation and requisition, (2) land reform as the primary solution to land problems, (3) the importance of labor and production after the distribution of land should be stressed, and (4) land reform is based on a scheduled policy, which does not mention land in pawn and deposits for renting. What the farming masses want from the landlords is land, draft animals, farm implements, title deeds, rent deeds, surplus grain, and surplus houses. They do not want to interfere with landlords who engage in industrial enterprises, unearth

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movable property of landlords, or inflict wanton beatings and corporal punishment. The landlords should be educated through landlord meetings in order to acquaint them with land reform and persuade them to surrender their titles, land, and rent deeds. Those who oppose or sabotage land reform will be brought to justice according to law. To carry out confiscation and requisition successfully, Confiscation and Requisition Committees should be organized with teams for confiscation registry, custody, and examination attached directly to them. The committeemen should be the progressive elements who are educated and disciplined in regard to land reform. After the confiscation of the landlords' titles, deeds of rent, and farm implements, the last may be handled by one of the two following methods: (1) keep the farm implements in a central place, or (2) allow the landlords to keep the farm implements and ask them to loan them with IOU forms. As to land not occupied by its owners, we should notify the absentee landowners to return; otherwise the land will be confiscated.

#### 4. Distribution:

- a. Requirements: We should achieve an equitable distribution.
- b. Principles of distribution: (1) Unity and protection of farmers, (2) fairness of the officials, (3) rational distribution, (4) benefits to production, (5) democratic discussion, and (6) satisfaction to all farmers.
- c. Object of distribution: Land of the landlords.
- d. In accordance with the above-stated principles, we should educate the farming masses:
  - 1) Poor and tenant farmers: Tell them the success of the confiscation is a result of the unity of the farmers led by the CCP and Chairman MAO Tse-tung. To prevent resistance by the landlords, the farmers should unite and protect each other. Tell them that confiscation is not distribution. The object of confiscation is the landlords, while the object of distribution is the farmers themselves. Next, tell them to redouble their production efforts after they receive the distributed land. In addition, correct their misconceptions about principles of averages and simple economic theories.
  - 2) Middle and tenant farmers: Tell them that they tilled for others before but they now till their own land. They have been rejuvenated from the oppression of the landlords.
  - 3) Rich farmers: Tell them to follow the farming masses and abide by government decrees. If they are selfish, they will be criticized; if they oppose and sabotage the land reform, they will be punished in accordance with law.
- e. Methods of distribution: We should adopt the principle of "volunteering to submit one's land for public decision and democratic discussion about self-surrendered land of the landlords." After repeated discussion about self-surrendered land by the village peasant representative conference, the teams of peasant associations and the administrative teams, final decisions should rest with the Peasant Association. Generally, before the officials distribute the landlords' land, they should

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reserve a portion of land of average quality for the original owner. In distributing land we should comply with a map or chart of the land. In distributing farm implements, we should limit the distribution in a village to the need of the farmers. When a surplus house is distributed, the furniture is also distributed. In case some persons wish to have a portion of land to till, a tract of land may be given them after discussion by some representative teams, on the condition that they really farm the land instead of renting it out.

5. Conclusion of land reform and its transformation into production:

- a. When the work of land reform is completed, we should work out conclusions based on the experiences of land reform and further the consciousness of the masses by comparing or choosing model progressive elements.
- b. After land reform, we should aid the peasants to overcome production difficulties and obtain irrigation and fertilizers and to understand the need for austerity.
- c. We may hold a celebration by inviting the peasants living near the village to celebrate the peasant victory, with expenses limited.
- d. We should mobilize the peasants who have gone through land reform to assist other villages in the program. The progressive elements should take part in the land reform work corps and conduct land reform in other nearby villages. Finally, a county village representative conference should be called to make public the experiences of land reform in the basic villages.

Basic Principles of Land Reform Under the Present New Circumstances

1. "Depend upon the poor and tenant farmers and unite with the middle farmers" is our party's general policy. If we do not realize this point, the other problems will not be solved. Depending upon the poor and tenant farmers means reliance on the highest class-consciousness and organizational solidarity of the poor and tenant farmers. For that, we should not only develop the consciousness of the poor and tenant farmers to the level of a leading class, but also enable them to execute our party policy. To ask the peasants to execute land reform which conforms with party policy may cause unfavorable reaction because of their retrogressive attitude. Therefore, we must increase the enlightenment of the peasants by education so as to make them understand their immediate and future benefits if they adopt the party policy completely.
2. Forms of struggle with the landlord class: We can adopt various forms of struggle against the landlords, including state power, reasoning, and holding landlords' forums, but state power is best. It is wrong to make a peaceful settlement instead of struggling with the landlords. No matter how conditions change, we adhere to struggle against landlords, although it may take different forms. At the same time, we should prevent the following two tendencies: (1) left -- wanton beating and arrest as practiced in the old liberated areas, and (2) right -- cease struggling against landlords because of their change of attitude. Do not believe that the landlords have now become democratic. Their change of attitude is not due to their willingness to surrender to the masses of farmers but to the change of circumstances and the victory of the people.
3. The basic problem of land reform is a solution of the land problem, because the primary demand of the peasants is nothing but land. We should center our efforts on solving the land problem first, and we should complete land reform in the whole province by next March. Meanwhile, we must realize that land reform

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is only the start of solving the difficulties of the peasants and it cannot solve all of them. Labor and techniques are necessary to open a bright future for the peasants after the land problem is settled.

4. The people's road: We should take the people's road to lead them. As soon as we get the most important experiences in leading the masses, we extend the experience to other officials. The holding of meetings of representatives is also of significance because we know the representatives, the most progressive elements of the masses, will cooperate with the officials.
5. Officials: When the officials take charge of land reform, they should become well acquainted with the policy, route, tactics, and forms of struggle. They must adopt neither the principle of "narrow experience" nor rightist tendencies.

#### Experience of the Sung Chiang (H.K. 11) People's Court -- Supplement

The People's Court is one of the paramount weapons in land reform. It can not only suppress the resistance and sabotage of the landlords but can also elevate the consciousness of the masses. Regarding its organization, every hsien must organize a People's Court, and two chu share one sub-court with a Justice Committee directly attached to it. The Justice Committee consists mainly of peasant representatives and worker representatives, as well as industrial and commercial representatives. When it is established, the members should learn the decrees and regulations connected with land reform and should master them. Landlords who engage in sabotage must be arrested. Then accusation meetings are called against landlords and data are collected, and a forum composed of various circles is held to bring out the opinions of the masses with substantial witnesses and evidence. Among the masses, the progressive elements should be chosen to reason with the landlords, and visitors seats, totaling about 500 for representatives from various levels, should be filled.

When the court is opened, the chief justice must announce that the plaintiff has accused the landlords of various offenses and bring out his points to settle the case. Next the defendants are allowed to defend themselves, and then the plaintiff makes his counterplea. When the debate between the plaintiff and defendants is in progress, the chief justice must know how to inspire the plaintiff and the visitors to speak so as to arouse public debate.

From the above, we know that the People's Court has the following importance:

- a. The People's Court is a powerful weapon with which to suppress reactionary activities of the landlords and also to form a united front of various classes against feudalism. It will be supported by the public if it is managed well.
- b. Coordination must be effected between the plaintiff, the chief justice, and the visiting representatives.
- c. Let the landlords defend their cases and make them expose their crimes when the counterplea is made. When the court's first hearing of the case is conducted, the magistrate of the hsien should take the post of chief justice and collect all data and archives for inquiries of people of various levels.

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